

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows. The claims are in the format as required by 35 C.F.R. § 1.121.

1. (Previously Presented) A method comprising:
receiving one or more bits of synchronization data from a transmitter in a receiver of a communications link, wherein the synchronization data corresponds to at least one bit from a corresponding transmitter shift register;
loading the one or more bits of synchronization data into a shift register in the receiver, wherein the receiver shift register has a feedback circuit;
if the receiver shift register is filled with synchronization data, initiating synchronized operation of the receiver shift register with the corresponding transmitter shift register, wherein during synchronized operation, a bit sequence generated by the receiver shift register is compared to a received bit sequence to identify the occurrence of errors in a data transmission from the transmitter; and
if the receiver shift register is not filled with synchronization data, shifting the loaded synchronization data and loading one or more additional bits of synchronization data into the receiver shift register.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein receiving one or more bits of synchronization data comprises receiving idle codes containing synchronization data.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising determining whether the receiver shift register is filled with synchronization data by counting a predetermined number of cycles after a reset event.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the receiver shift register comprises a plurality of serially coupled flip-flops, and wherein shifting the loaded synchronization data comprises shifting the bit in each flip-flop to a next flip-flop.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein loading the one or more additional bits of synchronization data into the receiver shift register comprises loading the one or more

additional bits of synchronization data into one or more predetermined cells of the receiver shift register.

6-23. Cancelled.